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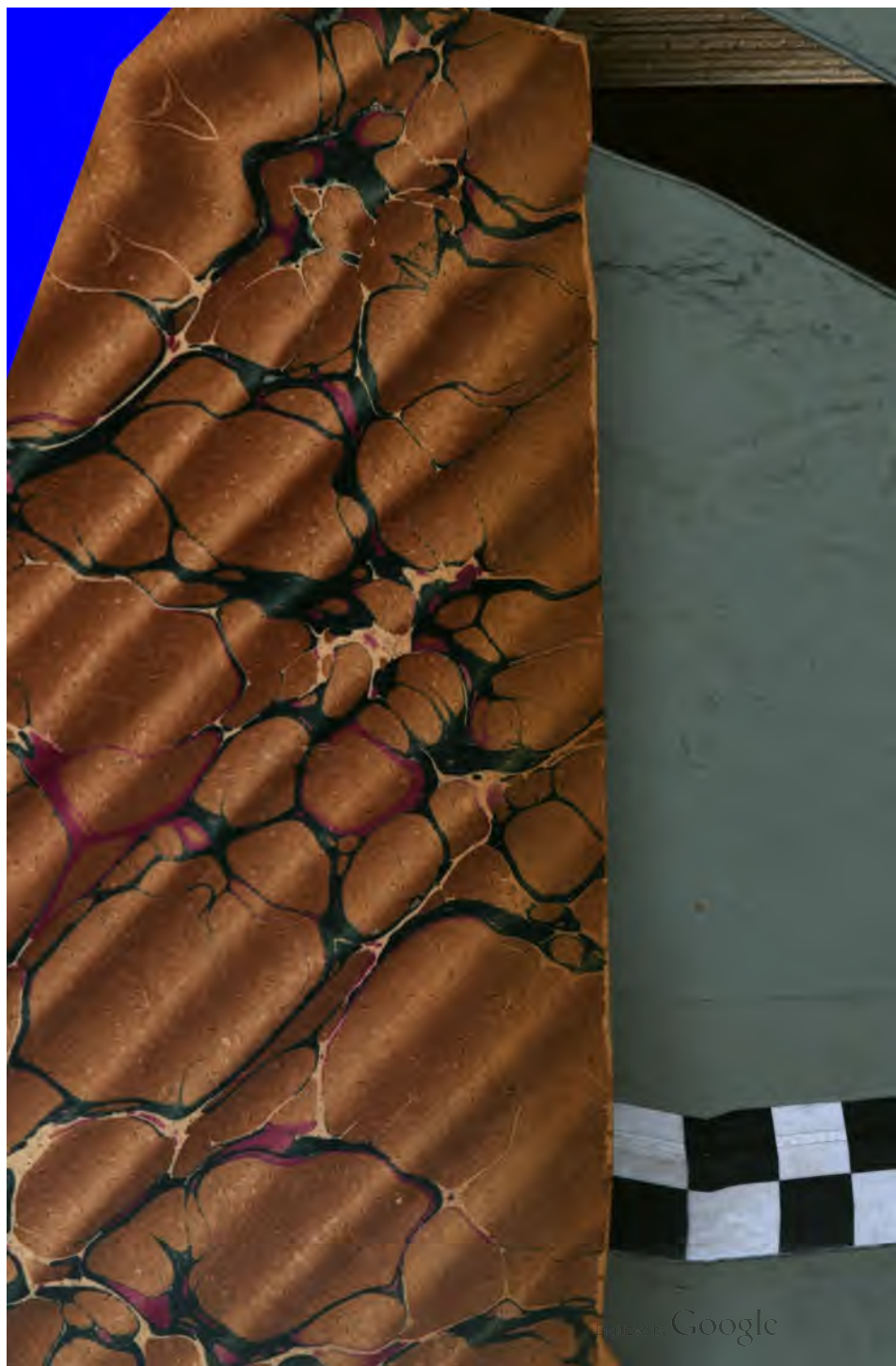
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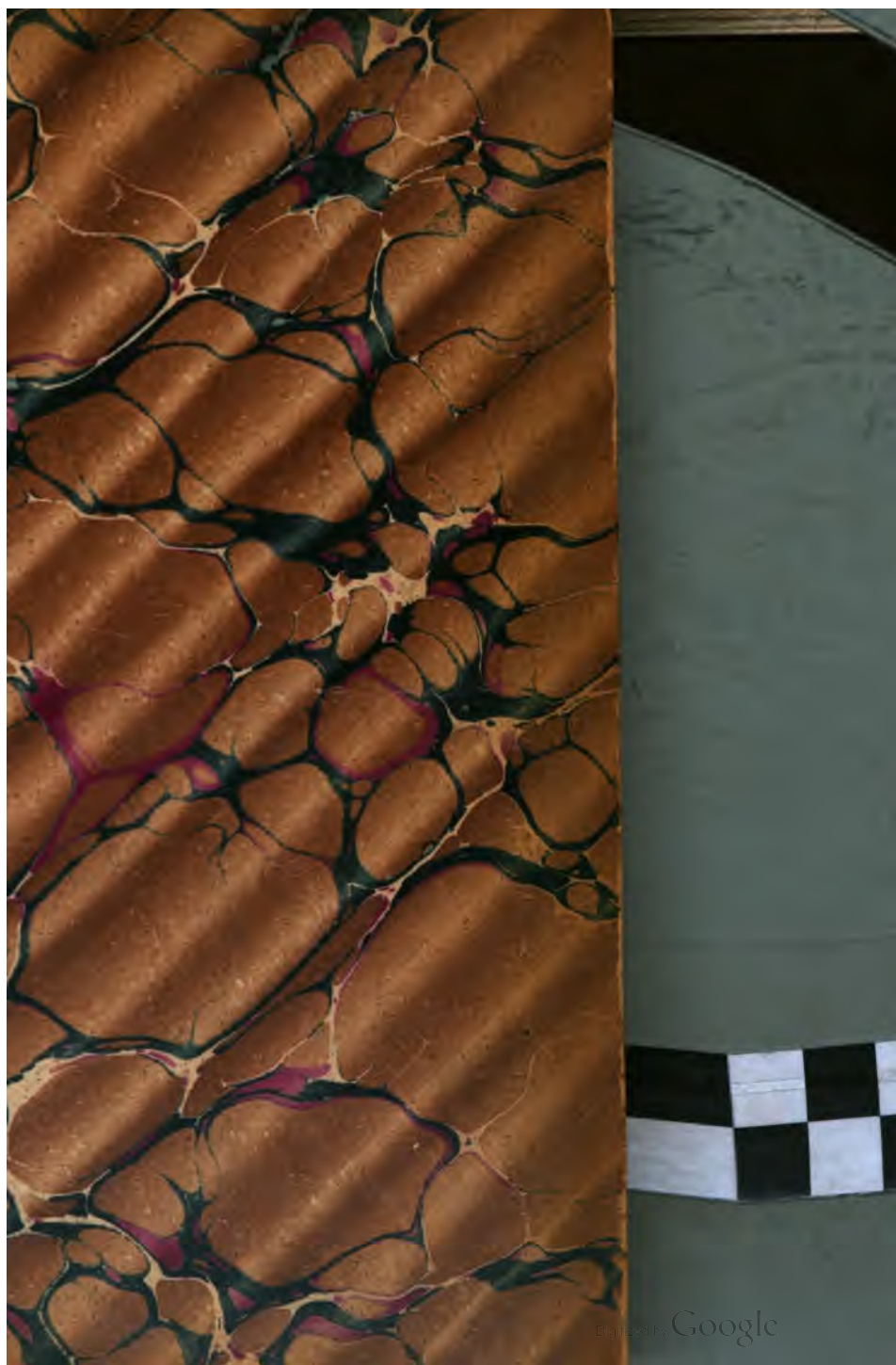
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MOLLENTRAVE ON WOMEN

A Comedy in Three Acts

BY

ALFRED SUTRO

AUTHOR OF "THE WALLS OF JERICHO," "A MARRIAGE HAS
BEEN ARRANGED," "A MAKER OF MEN," "THE
GUTTER OF TIME," "A GAME OF CHESS,"
"MR. STEINMANN'S CORNER,"
"CARROTS."

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Robert Louis Shaw

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The following is a copy of the original programme :

ST. JAMES THEATRE

KING STREET, S.W.

Monday, February 13th, 1905.

THIS EVENING AT 9

WILL BE ACTED

MOLLENTRAVE ON WOMEN

A New and Original Comedy in Three Acts

By ALFRED SUTRO.

"I wish it to be distinctly understood that, my scientific investigations notwithstanding, I still regard woman as an amiable creature."

(MOLLENTRAVE ON WOMEN: *Introduction.*)

Mr. Mollentrave.....	MR. ERIC LEWIS.
Sir Joseph Balsted, K.C., M.P.	MR. NORMAN MCKINNEL.
Everard Swenboys.....	MR. LESLIE FABER.
Lord Contareen.....	MR. ROBERT HORTON.
Mr. Dexter.....	MR. E. VIVIAN REYNOLDS.
Mr. Noyes.....	MR. GERALD JEROME.
Peters.....	MR. E. H. BROOKE.
Martin.....	MR. MURRAY CARRINGTON.
Lady Claude Derenham.....	MISS MARION TERRY.
Margaret Messilent.....	MISS LETTICE FAIRFAX.
Miss Treable.....	MISS NORA GREENLAW.
Mrs. Martelli.....	MRS. KEMMIS.

ACT I.—Study in Sir Joseph Balsted's House.

ACT II.—Drawing-room in Mr. Mollentrave's House.

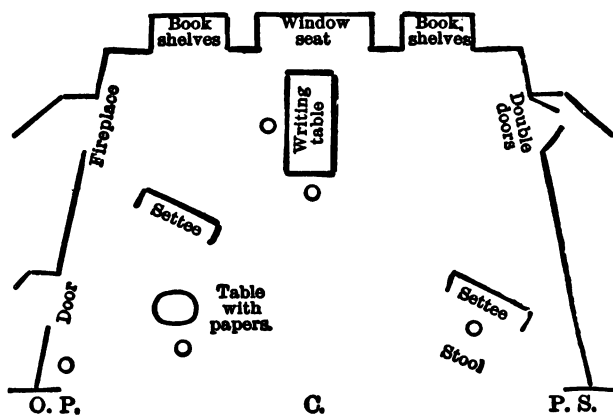
ACT III.—Garden of Mr. Mollentrave's House at Swanage.

TIME—The Present.

ACT I.

Time of Representation, forty minutes.

SCENE.



HAND PROPS.

Book (Mollentrave on Women).

Bag (for Noyes).

Flowers (Everard).

Photographs on Mantelpiece.

MOLLENTRAVE ON WOMEN.

ACT. I.

SIR JOSEPH BALSTED'S study, in his house in Hans Place.

MISS TREABLE, MARGARET'S companion, a faded lady of uncertain age, is fingering the photograph on the mantelpiece **R.** **MRS. MARTELLI**, the housekeeper, a grim-faced, elderly woman, dressed in stiff black silk, opens the door and enters **L. 3 E.** **MISS TREABLE**, absorbed in a photograph she holds in her hand, does not notice her. **MRS. MARTELLI** coughs emphatically.

MISS TRE. (*coming c. turning*) Oh!... Dear Mrs. Martelli, do you know who this is?

MRS. MAR. (*c. shortly*) Sir Joseph's sister.

MISS TRE. What an angelic face! The outline so pure. Such heavenly eyes. (*returns R. and puts frame back*)

MRS. MAR. (*c.*) She was marked with small-pox, and had a pronounced squint.

MISS TRE. (*disconcerted*) Ah! I have noticed these photographs before. I have a passion for photographs. This one—? (*coming c.—she takes up another*)

MRS. MAR. (*takes photo from MISS TRE.*) Sir

Joseph's mother. The other ladies are his cousin, his aunt by marriage, and—me. (MISS TRE. goes R.)

MISS TRE. (*with surprise*) You!

MRS. MAR. (*with dignity*) My late husband, Captain Martelli, of his Majesty's Indian army, was a friend of Sir Joseph's (c.). I trust you find nothing remarkable in his widow's photograph reposing on Sir Joseph's mantelpiece?

MISS TRE. (*comes down R. and sits R. c. chair*) Oh, not at all, not at all... My father was Canon Treable—he preached before the Queen.

MRS. MAR. (*puts photo back R. and comes down R. c.*) So I have frequently heard. But I admit it is a theme on which one cannot dwell too often. None the less I consider it my duty, as Sir Joseph's housekeeper, to inform Canon Treable's daughter that this room is, as it were, consecrated to Sir Joseph.

(MISS TRE. rises and crosses L. and sits on stool.)

And that it is his wish, his formally expressed instruction, that none but myself should enter it.

MISS TRE. Oh!

MRS. MAR. (*to desk c.*) I allow no housemaid here—I dust it myself. Sir Joseph, in common with most legal gentlemen, is partial to dust, but I control his partiality. So you understand—(*down c.*)

MISS TRE. But the Courts have risen to-day, dear Mrs. Martelli! The Long Vacation, they call it, do they not? For nigh on three months Sir Joseph ceases to be the brilliant advocate; Parliament is not sitting, so the House will not hear his inspired accents—

MRS. MAT. My accents may be less inspired, but they rest on authority; and I beg you to heed them. This room is private.

MISS TRE. (*sweetly*) I can quite understand that, to the servants, it is a sanctuary.

MRS. MAR. To the servants, and the upper servants, Miss Treable. You and I are both upper servants.

MISS TRE. (*rise, indignantly*) Mrs. Martelli! This is intolerable. I am dear Margaret's companion— (*sit on stool L. C.*) her trusted friend—

MRS. MAR. At so much per annum, paid quarterly. Sir Joseph has confided the government of his household to me.

MISS TRE. (*proudly*) I am not a member of your household, madam! I take orders from Sir Joseph alone—and then they come in form of requests!

MRS. MAR. You compel me, therefore, to inform Sir Joseph of your truculent attitude—and demand your dismissal.

MISS TRE. (*rise*) Dismissal!

MRS. MAR. It would of course be within my province to dismiss you myself—

MISS TRE. (*up to her c.*) Insolent!

MRS. MAR. But I shall leave that disagreeable duty to Sir Joseph; and I have no doubt that it will come, as you say, in the form of a request. I have the honour to wish you good morning.

(EXIT. L. 1 E.)

(MISS TREABLE *sinks on the sofa R. C. and sobs.*

EVERARD *comes in from back L. 3 E., a good-looking youngster of 25.*)

EVERARD. (R. C.) Why, Treaby, what's the matter?

MISS TRE. (*stamping her foot*) How dare you call me Treaby!

EVERARD. Oh, I beg your pardon—but Margaret always does.

MISS TRE. Am I to be forever insulted in this house? First by a wretched servant—then by a mere boy!

EVERARD. A boy—hang it! I shall be a full-fledged doctor soon. But I apologise—there! And Martelli's a hedgehog. Leave off sobbing (*over back of settee*) do!

MISS TRE. (*through her tears*) I will tell Sir Joseph he must choose between her—and me!

EVERARD. She's an awful Tartar—I wonder my uncle puts up with her. But come now, dear Miss — Evangeline—

MISS TRE. (*cooly*) Mr. Swenboys?

EVERARD. (*eagerly*) Did you give Margaret those verses?

MISS TRE. I did.

EVERARD. (*excited, away R. c.*) Well? Well?

MISS TRE. She—laughed.

EVERARD. (*aghast*) Laughed!

MISS TRE. But really—why did you steal them from Swinburne?

EVERARD. (*comes C.*) The devil! She spotted it?

MISS TRE. Naturally. She adores Swinburne.

EVERARD. I altered a word or two—I did, I swear. And of course poetry's not in my line. But I didn't think girls were allowed to read Swinburne!

MISS TRE. An old-fashioned prejudice. To-day we throw open the whole book of life.

EVERARD. I didn't know! (*returning to back of settee R. c.*) But—Miss Treable—you're my friend, aren't you? You'll help me?

MISS TRE. I am always on the side of love.

EVERARD. Have I a chance, do you think? A millionth part of a chance?

MISS TRE. You never speak to her!

EVERARD. How can I? She's too—magnificent—she dazzles me! Her eyes scorch me—I become

idiotic! I can talk, as a rule, I've something to say—but not to her, not to her! Although Martelli thinks—

MISS TRE. Martelli! That hateful name! Oh!

(*Her sobs begin again. MARGARET enters from back L. 3 E.: she pauses shyly at seeing EVERARD.*)

MARGARET. (c.) Oh Everard! Have you got the flowers—the white roses?

EVERARD. Yes, here they are. (*up L. c.*)

MARGARET. How good of you. (*turning to*

MISS TREABLE, (*and throwing her arms round her*) What, dearest Treaby! Crying!—(*cross R. c.*)

EVERARD. (*coming c.*) Martelli has upset her.

MARGARET. Again! Oh, the wretch! How I wish that my guardian would send her away! (*R. c.*)

EVERARD. You have only to—to—to ask! Could he—is there a man who—who could—anything, anything, Margaret! Oh!

(*He flies, overcome with confusion, and EXIT back L. 3 E.*)

MARGARET. Poor Everard! (*she gazes pensively after him for a moment—then turns to MISS TREABLE again*) Do not cry! I will speak to Sir Joseph; he shall see that this woman makes me unhappy.

MISS TRE. (*drying her eyes*) Dearest Margaret!

MARGARET (*looking around—sitting chair c.*) Oh, how my heart beats when I find myself in his room!

MISS TRE. He is the grandest, greatest of men—

MARGARET. In this morning's paper they men-

tion his name three times. And they've his portrait in the Sketch!

MISS TRE. And so like him!

MARGARET. His speech in that copyright case yesterday! His triumph!

MISS TRE. I felt you quiver as you sat beside me—

MARGARET. He saw us there, I think...As his eye swept past, I noticed a tremble in his voice. And, after that, I felt that he was speaking—for me!

MISS TRE. His peroration was sublime.

MARGARET. (*rise, down R. C. and sit in chair*) It was odious of that old man's daughter to thank him so effusively. I detest Lady Claude!

MISS TRE. (*rising and R. C.*) Jealous, my Margaret? They knew each other, in the long ago. I have an idea that he once—but he has not her photograph! I came here to see!

MARGARET. It is not on the mantelpiece.

MISS TRE. Nor in his desk. I looked!

MARGARET. Oh! You should not have done that!

MISS TRE. There is no limit to my devotion. It is true Lady Claude is handsome.

MARGARET. (*indignantly*) Handsome! A widow—and old! Why, she's thirty-five, at least!

MISS TRE. (*tartly away L.*) My age, Margaret!

MARGARET. (*rise and across to her*) Ah, dear Treaby, forgive me! But—when I am here—in his room—and think of—a possible rival! (*up to desk c.*) Here, where he sits, and works! Every day I steal in, and let fall a flower. I love to think of him kissing that flower, perhaps—who knows, wearing it next his heart! If he only would speak to me! Little girl, he calls me, then turns his eyes timidly away. Little girl! Oh never did lover's epithet sound so sweet!

(Since having the flowers MARGARET has been undoing them and dropping them about the room.)

MISS TRE. *(sit on settee L.)* I have seen him, when your name was mentioned, change colour, and murmur something beneath his breath.

MARGARET. *(sit on stool L.)* What was it? Oh, what?

MISS TRE. Nay, I could not catch. But Margaret, tell me—Everard has been imploring—

MARGARET. *(softly)* Ah, poor Everard! It was not till you opened my eyes, dear Treaby, that I—of course I am fond of Everard—oh, very fond! But—can I hesitate! Between a boy—and a great man—a leader of men! Dear Treaby, *(rise and up c.)* I beseech you—leave me here, for a moment!

MISS TRE. *(rise and up L. c.)* I go, dear child, I go—I feel that my eyes are red—I must wash away these tears. Plead for me with your guardian, Margaret—rid us of the hateful Martelli!

MARGARET. *(round to L. c. and embracing MISS TRE.)* I will try—oh, I will try!

(MISS TREABLE kisses her devotedly and goes L. 3 E. MARGARET, after a glance round the room, to make sure she is unobserved, takes a rose, kisses it, and lays it on SIR JOSEPH'S desk—up C. R. of desk.)

Speak for me, rose, and tell him of my love! Lie fondly on his heart, dear rose!

(SIR JOSEPH'S voice is heard outside, talking to MRS. MAR. MARGARET starts and retreats to down C. SIR JOSEPH enters from R. talking to MRS. MARTELLI.)

SIR J. *(R. c.)* Come, come, Mrs. Martelli, she didn't mean anything! She couldn't have, you

know! (*he sees MARGARET*) Ah, little girl, you there? Er—er—Mrs. Martelli and I—

MARGARET. (c.) I go, guardian, I go! But—one word—for poor Miss Treable. She is the only friend I have in the world!

(*She goes out L. 3 E.*)

SIR J. (c.) There, you hear that? The only friend she has in the world! Now, can I send her away? (*up to desk and sitting*) I put it to you!

MRS. MAR. (*grimly*) Every companion Miss Messilent has had has been her only friend. And let the lady stay by all means, Sir Joseph. (R. c.) Only you will permit me to take my departure.

SIR J. (*very annoyed, sitting at his desk, taking up the rose and dropping it in the waste-paper basket*) I wish that girl wouldn't let her confounded flowers trail all over the place! Why does she come in here? Can't I have one room in the house to myself?

MISS MAR. (*picking up flowers which MARGARET has dropped*) That was precisely the cause of my altercation with Miss Treable, Sir Joseph. I found her inspecting the photographs on the mantelpiece.

SIR J. Confound her impudence! I'll say a word to her. We'd better keep the door locked in future, eh?

MRS. MAR. (R. c. *adamant*) You will have to choose, Sir Joseph, between Miss Treable and me.

SIR J. (*wheedling, rise and down R. c.*) Come, come, Mrs. Martelli, you and I have been together too long to allow a trifle like this to part us. Besides, we're all going off in a day or two—Miss Treable may get married in the Long Vacation—

MRS. M. Married—she! She'll never see forty again!

SIR J. Won't she, though? Well, after all,

that's no concern of mine. I don't want her to see forty again—for the matter of that I don't want to see *her* again. But she's the girl's companion—and the girl must have a companion—and if the Treable woman goes I shall have to find another companion. That's so, isn't it?

MRS. MAR. (*still adamant*) Sir Joseph—

SIR J. And I want to be off to Scotland to-morrow! Come, come, Mrs. Martelli—

MRS. MAR. Sir Joseph, that person has made use of certain expressions to me that render further residence with her under the same roof impossible. I regret it—for my dear husband's sake, I regret it. But you will have to choose.

(*She goes R. I. E. with majesty. SIR JOSEPH is exceedingly vexed. He pishes and pshaws, seizes his blotting pad, hurls it to the other end of the room, then goes and fetches it—then takes up paper R. and reads, swearing softly to himself. PETERS the butler, ENTERS L. 3 E.*)

PETERS. (*up L. c.*) Mr. Mollentrave and Lady Claude Derenham have called, Sir Joseph.

SIR J. (*puts paper down eagerly, R. c.*) Ah, I'll go down. They're in the drawing-room, I suppose?

PETERS. (*up L. c.*) No, Sir Joseph—Miss Mes-silent and Miss Treable are playing a duet in the drawing-room—

SIR J. (*discontentedly*) Ah—in the library, then?

PETERS. No, Sir Joseph—Mr. Swenboys is smoking a pipe in the library—

SIR J. (*furious*) Not a room in my house! Where in Heaven's name are they?

PETERS. In the dining-room, Sir Joseph.

SIR J. (*stamping his foot*) The dining-room! Bring them up here, Peters—quick!

(PETERS goes L. 3 E. SIR JOSEPH goes to glass R. and arranges tie, etc. PETERS returns with MR. MOLLENTRAVE and LADY CLAUDE. MOLLENTRAVE is a very old man, with masses of snow-white hair; notwithstanding his age, he is alert and agile, with no trace of feebleness. LADY CLAUDE is a beautiful and fascinating woman. LADY C. ENTERS, shakes hands with SIR J. C., and gets away L. C. as MOLLEN. ENTERS.)

MOLLEN. (*with outstretched hands—c.*) My dear Balsted! Forgive this intrusion. But I had to come and congratulate you again on the way you conducted my case. You were masterly! Masterly.

SIR J. (C.) You are very good, Mr. Mollentrave. Our copyright law is intricate. (MOL. crosses behind SIR J. to R. and undoes book) It was a very nice point (*he shakes hands with LADY CLAUDE*) And you, Lady Claude, are you pleased?

MOLLEN. (R. C.) Need you ask, when my book was in question! Rosamund is naturally proud of her father's work!

LADY C. (L. C.) And I am especially glad of the opportunity the case has given me of renewing an ancient friendship.

SIR J. (C.) Yes—we are very old friends, you and I! You have been abroad a long time?

LADY C. Yes—in Italy—since my husband's death.

SIR J. I trust you have now returned for good?

MOLLEN. (*comes c. a step*) I don't mean to part with her any more, Balsted! Italian cypresses may set off a widow's weeds—but now, that two years have passed! (LADY C. *sits on stool. He produces a book*) Balsted, I have taken the liberty to bring you my book—the *casus*

belli—with an autograph inscription. (c. *he presents it with a flourish*) Allow me to offer it to you!

SIR J. (*taking it*) I am very much obliged.

MOLLEN. (R. C. *rubbing his hands*) "Mollentrave on Women!" I venture to say it is in a fair way to become a classic.

LADY C. (*smiling*) He has given away all our secrets!

MOLLEN. I was an observer from boyhood. Like Dante, I fell in love at the age of nine. Unlike Dante, I made notes. In the interests of my self-imposed study I married three time. (*by chair R.*) In short, you will find, between these covers, a most careful, complete investigation on scientific principles, of the baffling, perplexing creature known to us as WOMAN!

LADY C. (*in smiling protest*) Papa!

MOLLEN. (*comes c. a step*) Your pardon, my child! You are, of course, the topmost blossom of the spreading tree. You have inherited, if I may say so, my mental energy.

SIR J. (c. *fingering the book*) I am disappointed that Lady Claude's photograph does not figure as frontispiece.

MOLLEN. Ha, ha, very good! (*away R. and returning*) But—in all seriousness (*takes book*), Balsted—it is a guide, a hand-book, a Baedeker! It conducts you personally to the most hidden recesses of the feminine heart, opens every door, strips every cupboard! (R. C.) No marriage license should be issued to the man who cannot pass his examination in Mollentrave! (*Goes R. to table and puts book down*) As a result there would be cobwebs in the Divorce Court! You practise there, by the way?

SIR J. Heaven forbid! No—I am on the Chancery side—

MOLLEN. (c.) Ah—that's a pity—I should

have valued expert criticism. I am at present revising the book for its next edition—which will be the twenty-third!

SIR J. (*c. on his L.*) The twenty-third? Really!

MOLLEN. My dear sir, the work has been translated into every living tongue. I am told there are women's clubs where it is the custom solemnly to execrate me after dinner. In Dover Street "to be mollentraved" has passed into the language. It means—to be found out!

LADY C. (*rising*) Papa, we must not take up Sir Joseph's time.

SIR J. On the contrary! And my interviews with you have been too brief, these many years past, for me to desire to curtail them. Besides, I find myself to-day in a position of some perplexity—and truly, should value your advice!

LADY C. (*archly*) Mine—or papa's?

SIR J. Both! Please sit down. Will you listen to my tale of woe?

(*LADY C. sits settee L.*)

MOLLEN. Gladly. It is the least we can do for you, after your magnificent service. (*MOL. gets chair R. C. and sits*)

(*They sit.*)

SIR J. (*sits up c. front of desk*) Well then, here goes! As you are aware, I am unmarried. Many years ago (*he looks at LADY CLAUDE who drops her eyes*) I loved a lady, who, very wisely, preferred another. (*MOLLENTRAVE points waggishly to the book*) Ah, Mr. Mollentrave, had I then been able to consult your work!

MOLLEN. I was labouring at it for twenty years before I gave it to the world.

SIR J. My misfortune to have been born too

soon! Well, I settled down to single blessedness, and worked hard. My existence was tranquil. An elderly lady, widow of a man I had known, kept house for me, and left me undisturbed. My life was all work, with an occasional game at bridge. I had never been a....lady's man.... the sex did not—let us say, appreciate me—and I, while admiring them from a distance, have avoided their closer neighborhood.

MOLLEN. My dear friend, you have denied yourself one of the most fruitful sources of amusement!

SIR J. That may be, but I am constitutionally shy. And law and politics, you see, took up all my time—I settled down—contentedly enough, into old fogeydom. My one care was a nephew, a good lad, who walked the hospitals and has just passed his final exam. Well, so far all was untroubled. But now comes the catastrophe. A year ago an old friend of mine died in Australia—a companion of my boyhood—and bequeathed me—his daughter!

MOLLEN. (*alert*) Ah!

SIR J. His motherless daughter! I received her letter by the morning's post—she came in the afternoon! A girl! Imagine it! My austere dwelling invaded by a bouncing, flouncing girl!

MOLLEN. (*chuckling*) Terrible!

SIR J. It *was* terrible. Lady Claude will excuse me—

LADY C. (*smiling*) Oh yes!

SIR J. My feelings at that moment could only be expressed in camera. There was no way out—he had appointed me her guardian—it was a sacred trust—I could do nothing. (*rise*) She was too old to send to school—too young to live alone. And here was I, to whom girls are esoteric, mysterious things, of strange, uncanny ways—I, who don't know what to say to them, how to

feed them or amuse them, I who go into no society, have no small-talk, don't dance or play ping-pong—here was I suddenly overwhelmed by this avalanche of laces and muslins!

MOLLEN. Heaven sent you a full-grown daughter, without the expensive preliminaries!

SIR J. Let us hope Heaven meant it kindly—but there are occasions, doubtless, when even Providence nods! Well, after a considerable struggle with myself, I accepted the inevitable. I moved from my comfortable bachelor's quarters, took this house, found her a companion—who at once proceeded to quarrel with the housekeeper. I had to dismiss her and engage another—the same story! (*sits on settee L. by LADY C.*) In twelve months I have had five companions. To-day another disturbance—for the sixth time I am bidden choose between them—and I had hoped to go to Scotland to-morrow. This may all sound very trivial—but truly I'm in despair!

LADY C. (*laughing*) Poor Sir Joseph!

MOLLEN. (*rise and go L. c. Earnestly*) My dear child, I can enter into our friend's feelings—this is no laughing matter!—Tell me now, Basted—what is she like, your ward?

SIR J. (*puzzled*) Like? Like all other girls, I imagine. I scarcely have looked at her. Pretty, I suppose, in a feeble kind of way. I have said good morning and good evening, taken her to an occasional theatre, and allowed her to prattle. She is only a child.

MOLLEN. (*quickly*) A mistake! They *never* are children!—How old is she?

SIR J. Eighteen, I believe—or nineteen, perhaps—possibly twenty.

MOLLEN. Of the sentimental order?

SIR J. (*laughing*) Truly, I've no idea!

MOLLEN. At least you can tell me her taste in literature?

SIR. J. (*searching in his memory*) Literature? She reads a good deal—though what, I've no notion. Stay, though—I remember, one night when I couldn't sleep, taking a book of hers upstairs, and having a superb night's rest. It was Somebody's Love-Letters.

LADY C. The Englishwoman's?

SIR J. Yes. That was it.

MOLLEN. Good. Were passages marked?

SIR J. The pages were peppered with lines and crosses.

MOLLEN. The boards protected with a cover?

SIR J. I rather imagine they were.

MOLLEN. Notes scribbled on the margin?

SIR J. I fancy so—yes, I am sure! Heaps of 'em!

MOLLEN. Clue No. 1. Perfect. (*triumphant*) In her clothing she will affect the darker shades?

SIR J. (*with an effort at memory*) Er—yes—

MOLLEN. Fond of flowers?

SIR J. She litters the place with them!

MOLLEN. I have her! Devours poetry, of course? Adores Wagner? Appetite languid, member of the Stage Society, and worships Ibsen?

SIR J. The name's familiar—I've heard her mention it—

MOLLEN. Of course! My dear fellow, I haven't seen the lady—and I prefer, as a rule, to visit the patient before pronouncing upon her case. But here all is simple, and there is no further need of analysis. She belongs to the large class, known as *Invertebrate Sentimentalists*. (*away R. C.*)

SIR J. (*rise and go C.*) The deuce she does!

MOLLEN. Harmless, my dear fellow—quite harmless! Now tell me—your nephew?

SIR J. Yes?

MOLLEN. Has he been here all the time?

SIR J. The last month only—he studied in Germany.

MOLLEN. Good. A normal, healthy lad?

SIR J. Quite.

MOLLEN. Age?

SIR J. Twenty-four or twenty-five.

MOLLEN. A little melancholy lately?

SIR J. Ah! The fact is. I *have* noticed—

MOLLEN. With the quickness of the trained advocate you have guessed my drift! My dear sir, your troubles are at an end. To restore your tranquillity, all you need do is to—add the ward to the nephew!

SIR J. (*gleefully*) By Jove! I should never have thought of it!

MOLLEN. That is where *I* come in. You talked of a will—she has money?

SIR J. Ten thousand pounds.

MOLLEN. Admirable. Now listen—

(LADY C. *rises and goes up* L. C.)

MOLLEN. (*sit in chair* R. C. *down stage*) It will take you exactly ten minutes. You will send for your nephew—meet him coldly—wave him to a chair. A set frown on your face. You will tell him severely you have detected his secret, (SIR J. *sits* c.) remarked his passion for your ward. You will upbraid him—remember, his adoration is certain! He will confess and beat his bosom. Then you melt—and send for the maiden.

SIR J. (*alarmed*) I? I speak to her? Never!

MOLLEN. In the interests of celerity! If you leave it to him he will bungle it. He will be abject, and she tyrannical. She will say “no” for certain, to see how he takes it. She will demand time—in short, there will be delay. You will find all this set down in my fourteenth chapter, called “The Cat and the Mouse.”